




## Faces, Changes, and Places: Tracing the Journey of Master Language Educators

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### ABSTRACT

Professional development like finishing graduate or post-graduate degrees is one of the key indicators of advancement in the practice of one's profession. This research traced the lived experiences of Master Language Educators through their faces (characteristics), changes (transformation or improvement), and places (personal and professional promotions) using qualitative-narrative research design. All 14 alumni of the Master of Arts in Education major in English in 2019-2021 were taken as participants of the study using a homogenous sampling technique. Based on the results, the participants characterized themselves as more linguistically capable and highly strategic after completing their graduate program. They have developed confidence and practice time management and nurtured a critical eye for literature. As to their personal and professional promotions, they experienced more leadership opportunities, promotion and salary increases, and a variety of exposures in the field. Assigning of advisers while taking thesis writing and providing more writing sessions for thesis writing and offering more literature subjects as electives were their suggestions to improve the program. It is recommended that the significant findings of the study be used in revisiting the program, its course offerings, and the enhancement of the curriculum.

### RESUMO

O desenvolvimento profissional, como a conclusão de cursos de graduação ou pós-graduação, é um dos principais indicadores de avanço na prática da profissão. Esta pesquisa rastreou as experiências vividas de Educadores Master Language por meio de seus rostos (características), mudanças (transformação ou melhoria) e lugares (promoções pessoais e profissionais) usando design de pesquisa narrativa-qualitativa. Todos os 14 ex-alunos do Mestrado em Educação em inglês em 2019-2021 foram considerados participantes do estudo usando uma técnica de amostragem homogênea. Com base nos resultados, os participantes caracterizaram-se como mais capazes linguisticamente e altamente estratégicos após a conclusão do programa de pós-graduação. Eles desenvolveram confiança e prática de gerenciamento de tempo e nutriram um olhar crítico para a literatura. Quanto às promoções pessoais e profissionais, vivenciaram mais oportunidades de liderança, promoções e aumentos salariais e diversas exposições na área. Atribuir orientadores durante a redação da tese e fornecer mais sessões de redação para a redação da tese e oferecer mais disciplinas de literatura como eletivas foram suas sugestões para melhorar o programa. Recomenda-se que as descobertas significativas do estudo sejam usadas para visitar o programa, suas ofertas de cursos e o aprimoramento do currículo.

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## **Introduction**

The success of an institution is usually seen in the performance of its students when in school, the awards they receive during graduation, the work that they do after graduation. Aside from the three considerations, success is also measured based on the changes that took place in the lives of alumni be it personal or in the areas of learning or promotion. To see all these is to allow them to narrate what they have been through, where they are at present, and listen to their stories through a tracer study.

A tracer study is a research which aims to track down or study alumni at one point to determine where they are and how well they are doing from where they are. Gathered data from tracer study may help institutions in their curriculum planning, faculty development program, and action planning.

The World Bank's influence has been critical in generating interest in tracer research. The World Bank has chosen tracer studies as the most effective way to evaluate more than 100 of its educational loans in developing countries, driven by the need to evaluate the effectiveness of its many educational investment projects and influenced by the opinions of both educators and economists concerned with improving the quality and efficiency of education. The results of the few tracer studies that have been conducted show that this method of investigation can give results that are either not derivable from cross-sectional studies or contradict cross-sectional study results (Schiefelbein and Farrell, 2010).

Tracer studies are directed towards institutional improvement, especially when the market demands keep on changing according to time and space. Institutions could only gather feedback from their former students using data from tracer studies. The institutions' knowledge of their graduates' whereabouts, working situations, and retrospective evaluations of their courses of study may generate curricular debate and be of interest to current and future students (Schomburg, 2003).

Tracer studies provide structural data on employment and career, work character and related competencies, as well as information on their graduates' professional orientation and experiences (Millington, 2003).

Rogan and Reynolds (2016) asserted that a Graduate Tracer Study (GTS) is useful for policy and equity implication in higher education. According to them, intervention for schools should not be the sole end of tracer studies. Instead, assistance to students from the start of their studies up to the time they finish must be ensured. This would greatly help them to maximize their potentials and resources.

Badiru and Wahome (2016) used experiences, methodologies, results, and lessons of a pioneer GTS conducted at Moi University. Their paper posits a seven-stage GTS guide that fits the needs of East Africa. Considering the recommendations and feedbacks of graduates allows

schools to recalibrate and revisit their programs and services sensitive to the needs and demands of students that will make them employable and successful in their endeavours.

Guzman et al (2008) argued that a graduate tracer study is a useful tool for measuring an institution's ability to prepare graduates to meet the needs of the workplace. Graduate tracer studies look at how graduates are doing in terms of job search, lead time, and employment status, as well as how they are using their school-learned information in the workplace, promotions, and job satisfaction.

The goal of education is to give people the knowledge, skills, and values they need to achieve the country's vision of becoming a fully developed nation in terms of economic development, social justice, spiritual, moral, and ethical strength, and to build a society that is united, democratic, liberal, and dynamic (Abu Bakar et al, 2009).

In the Philippines, one of the roles of higher education institutions (HEIs) is to ensure that its graduates are of good quality, as well as to assess the graduates' experiences during their degree studies and transition into the workforce. Graduate tracer research is one of each institution's research mandates, as well as a globally acknowledged method for quality assurance. Graduate tracer studies enable HEIs to improve their graduate teaching and training while also incorporating effective changes into institutional programs (CHED-NHERA 2009).

Rojas & Rojas (2016) established that the Cebu Technological University-Main Campus (CTU-MC) College of Education (CoE) were proven to be both competent and likely to succeed in terms of employability as supported by the themes that emerged in the study which are future high school teachers predominate on track, search for new employment begins, genesis of teaching novitiate, job-seeking: the struggle continues, teaching as a human relations act, relevant college of education curriculum. The study further revealed that CTU is functioning according to its mandate of preparing would be teachers in the workplace specifically in the public sector by providing them meaningful learning experiences which are situation and workplace sensitive and fitting.

Cuadra, Aure & Gonzaga (2019) concluded that students' degree programs, the learning that they earned, and the skills that they developed are in congruence with the demands of employment. This is strengthened by the respondents' data in which their degrees are highly relevant to their employment and to the functions that they perform.

Dimla, R. Pineda, J.L., & Quiambao, D. (2021) conducted a study titled Graduate Program Relevance and Mathematics Educators Career: Evidence from the Tracer Study. Based on the findings, the program contributed towards their professional development particularly in enhancing their content and pedagogical knowledge and research abilities. The program also paved the way toward various career opportunities when they earned the degree.

In other words, tracer studies allow schools to revisit their programs, enhance when and if necessary; update their curricula, revise when and if needed; and, assist their graduates towards a better placement in the workplace through matching the demands of the latter.

This study is anchored to Transformational Learning Theory by Mezirow (1991). He posits that adults view life with limited perspectives based upon limited experiences that shape their personal beliefs (truths). Through expanding their experiences, individuals may challenge existing beliefs and gain new perspectives identified as transformative learning. Experiences that inform transformative learning may happen quite suddenly, such as in the loss of a loved one or the birth of a child. They may also occur as a series of seemingly normal events that, over time, culminate in a significant change in perspective.

Meanwhile, King (2000) defines transformative learning (TL) as a construct that changes the mindset or consciousness of students towards the will or motivation to do something like to pursue graduate education. A lot of students pursue graduate education because they believe that this could change both their personal and professional lives. Because of this, they submit themselves to the rigors and challenges of graduate education to be able to achieve the transformation they long for.

Further, Nermstrom (2014) developed a Transformative Learning Model which is composed of four phases. These are (a) having experiences; (b) making assumptions; (c) challenging perspectives; and (d) experiencing transformative learning. Transformative learning then becomes a new experience. This model provides a visual representation of how transformations are constructed and identifies transformative learning as a continuous cycle of learning. Transformative learning, therefore, allows individuals to not go back to their prior beliefs, instead, they would love to carry on or continue experiencing transformative learning towards the achievement of their goals both in their studies and in life as a whole.

Transformative learning was discussed succinctly. This theory is very relevant in the present study because the participants are in their apex of learning which is graduate school and regarded as adult learners in terms of learning, experiences, and assumptions. Transformative learning is very relevant in the present study as it posits that when a learner experiences transformative learning he/she will not revert back to his/her prior beliefs. Instead, he/she will continue to see where his/her new learning will take him/her.

Tracer studies in the graduate school are dearth. Based on the quoted related studies and literature most of them were in the undergraduate. Not to mention that majority of the research designs used were either mixed research design or quantitative research design. This is where the present was situated. It captured graduate students and utilized qualitative research design to capture experiences and testimonies never surfaced by quantitative data.

## **Statement of the Problem**

The researcher traced the journey of Master Language Educators through their faces (characteristics), changes (transformation or improvement), and places (personal and professional promotions), during the period 2019-2021. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following specific questions:

1. How do the participants characterize themselves after completing their graduate program?
2. What changes did the participants develop after completing their graduate program?
3. What personal and professional promotions did they receive after completing their graduate program?
4. What suggestions do the participants consider important to improve the program?

## **Materials and Methods**

The researcher used qualitative-descriptive research design in the conduct of the study. Patton (2002) expressed that qualitative methods allow the researcher to study issues in depth with data collection often occurring through open-ended questions permitting “one to understand and capture the points of view of other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire categories”. Results include a wealth of detailed information about a small number of people; therefore, leading to an increase in the depth of understanding of these select individuals. Narrative inquiry records the experiences of an individual or small group, revealing the lived experience or particular perspective of that individual, usually primarily through interview which is then recorded and ordered into a chronological narrative.

In choosing the participants of the study, the researcher utilized purposive sampling. All MAEd in English students who were able to finish their theses in 2019-2021 were taken as participants of the study. The considerations of the researcher in selecting the participants were: a) they were students of MAEd in English from the time it was offered in 2017; b) they have finished their theses in 2019-2021; and, c) they have been in the profession for at least 3 years. All 14 alumni of the program satisfied the considerations and therefore were taken as participants. The number of participants ensured more in-depth, comprehensive, and encompassing discussion of the phenomenon at hand.

To gather the necessary data, the researcher adopted the general interview guide approach. The general interview guide approach sits in the middle of the other two approaches which are informal conversational and standardized open-ended. General interview includes the use of an outline of questions ensuring that all pertinent topics are covered (Patton, 2002).

The researcher observed proper ethical considerations in the conduct of the study. The participants were informed about the study prior to its conduct. Their permission to be part of the study was sought and their extent of participation was discussed thoroughly. They were informed, too that any piece of information or data gathered from them will be treated with anonymity and confidentiality. Their available time was also followed by the researcher to ensure smooth and uninterrupted interview sessions with them.

For data analysis, the researcher utilized narrative analysis. According to Holloway (2007) narrative analysis is one form of qualitative data analysis that it is often used in narrative inquiry. Narrative analysis is so flexible that it does not even follow definite guidelines on how to present it. However, narrative analysts may use one of four approaches. These are narrative thematic analysis, structural analysis, dialogic/performance analysis, and visual narrative analysis.

Specifically, the researcher applied the first approach which is narrative thematic analysis. Creswell (2014) discussed the five stages of narrative thematic analysis, namely: (a) organization and preparation of the data, (b) obtaining a general sense of the information, (c) the coding process, (d) categories or themes, and (e) interpretation of the data.

The results of the interview through recording were transcribed by the researcher. The researcher utilized narrative thematic analysis by Creswell which is composed of five steps. The researcher strictly followed every step in the analysis. Doubly checking all transcribed data, coded keywords and sub-codes, formed themes and sub-themes to ensure accuracy and relevance. After completing the entire process of data analysis, the researcher submitted the results to two readers who are professors in the Graduate School and Qualitative researchers at the same time to triangulate the results or at least ensure the correctness of the formed themes.

## **Results and Discussions**

From the analyzed data, the following are the results and discussion.

### **Participants Characterization of Themselves after Completing their Graduate Program.**

**Theme 1. More Linguistically Capable.** Language is a tool for communication across occasions and purposes. It is the instrument of the mind that capacitates an individual to put into words and sensible constructions what the mind dictates. A more recent way to put this is as a distinction between language as a communicative system and language as the internal component with underlying computation (Hauser et al., 2002).

To quote Chomsky, linguistic competence encompasses the knowledge of the speaker to his native language, its rules, and therefore application of such in actual language practice.

The participants realized their apparent transition after finishing their graduate program. From being a Bachelor's degree to becoming a Master's degree, the participants discovered their improved or better capacity to know and use language. Their responses that led to the formation of this theme include:

*“Masters is no joke. There are times that you have to put off some of your extra work in order to attend to some of your requirements in graduate school. Through reading, tons of reading, listening to my professors, sharing my classmates, I think I could confidently say that I have improved a lot in my knowledge of language. I consider myself more capable now.” P2*

*“I have improved a lot. I could characterize myself as a better individual and teacher of English. In our major subjects, I have noticed that I became more critical and careful everytime I speak. I feel like it's a sin to commit mistake. Because of that, I have improved much in my capacity to use the English language.” P7*

*“Our major defines who we are. If you are major in English, then people expect you to be perfect in English but that is not an instant thing. I am a living witness of the transition or transformation that I had experienced after finishing graduate school. I became more keen and careful in using the English Language.” P10*

Language is developing and not evolving. Because it develops, trends, matters on “acceptability” and “dying tendency” are considered to ensure the relevance of language in time, space, and context. Graduate education provides updated information to students in line with their program. What has not been covered by undergraduate education are usually highlighted by graduate education.

**Theme 2. Highly Strategic.** Hong Shi (2017) in her study “Learning Strategies and Classification in Education”, concluded that appropriate language learning strategies result in greater motivation and confidence. Strategy instructions can enhance learners' self-efficacy and autonomous learning and help learners to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers need to provide learners access to methodological resources and appropriate learning strategies, modeling strategies, and guidance to help learners make progress and achieve academic success.

When teachers are strategic in their approach to teaching, students become more engaged and feel so involved.

After completing their graduate program, one of the characteristics of the participants is being highly strategic. This theme is developed out of the following responses:

*“Aside from knowledge, I learned a lot of strategies from my professors especially in language and literature teaching.” P6*

*“If in the past I just asked my students to memorize rules if I want them to remember and apply them, I learned from my masters that I need to contextualize everything meaning making the lesson accessible to my students. This is one of the many strategies that I learned from my professors.” P10*

*“As teachers we are expected to know a lot of strategies but as a master graduate we are expected to be highly strategic in our approach to teaching.” P9*

Completing a graduate degree is equivalent to learning various and recent strategies relative to the specialized course or major. Thus, anyone who is armed with trendy strategies are always ready and confident to facilitate teaching and learning process.

### **Changes that the Participants Receive and Developed after Completing their Graduate Program**

**Theme 1. Developed Confidence and Practice Time Management.** Family, work, and studies, these are what individuals throw into the air and hope to catch all of them at the same time. Graduate studies may not be easy to all people and at all times but its benefit is beyond what one expects.

One of the changes that participants experience in their graduate program is their developed confidence and practice of time management.

According to Perkins (2018) self-confidence is related to success, achievements in education, conciliation, and a persons' well-being, among other things and self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-compassion are the three factors which can affect the level of self-confidence of any individual.

While a graduate student is busy attending to all his/her requirements, the clock is ticking and telling him/her to spend it wisely. The world is so fast-paced that an hour is gone without noticing it leaving. Achunine (2004) defines time management as the effective and efficient utilisation of a manager's or an administrator's corporate time to achieve organisational and personal goals. It involves identifying tasks to be performed, planning and scheduling of organisational activities, prioritising such activities, allocating time to the tasks according to their degree of importance in enhancing productivity, minimising interruptions and frivolities and dealing with routine tasks in such a way that the truly important tasks could receive due attention.

The testimonies of the participants confirmed that developed confidence and practice time management is one of the changes they had experienced after completing their graduate program. Their testimonies include:

*“Now that my English is more appropriate, correct in terms of diction and pronunciation, I gained more confidence in speaking.” P3*



*“My graduate program taught me discipline especially in using my time. I learned how to balance everything. Which comes first must come first. I think that’s time management. I became better which it comes to this.” P11*

*“At present I could bravely say that I am more confident, more organized, more discipline with my time, and accomplish a lot because of this transformation in me.” P12*

Even prior to pandemic, multi-tasking and simultaneous tasking has been the name of the game in the workplace. This is especially true among teachers who are not only asked to teach but to do auxiliary functions, too. In other words, time has become even very material to teachers who are completing their graduate degrees during weekend. Aside from their developed confidence because of new learning, those who finished graduate degrees are even wiser in spending their time because of the practice that they had when they were in graduate school.

**Theme 2. Nurtured Critical Eye for Literature.** Literature is a narrative of possibilities. Most of the time, its meaning lies beyond the text, aside from what the author intended. It is not appreciated by simply reading it on the surface level. Usually, its beauty appears when close reading is done. To appreciate literature is to subject it to analysis and criticism. To analyze it is to learn various literary approaches from Moralistic Approach of Plato to the Fifth Wave of Feminism at present.

One of the changes that took place in the professional lives of the participants is their ability to read literature. Their exposure to various literary genres in one of their major subjects led them to learn how to analyze.

To concretize this change in them, their testimonies are hereby presented:

*“I could say that I can teach literature. I can analyze poems. I can read between the lines. I can apply Freud’s construct of human psyche in analyzing literature.” P7*

*“I am now a literature teacher. I hope my Literary Theory and Criticisms professor would agree with me and be happy at the same time. I got challenged by her word that is to ask for the forgiveness of my former students for not teaching analyzing literature well to them. Now, I can. I can interpret and critic literature.” P4*

*“To say that Jack and Jill is about sexuality. Then, I will say that Bahay Kubo is about courtship. I am saying this because I now have a critical eye for literature where everything is really a metaphor.” P10*

Students need to learn how to analyze a piece of literature. They need to develop skills on how to surface what is beautiful in every piece. To do this is to have a teacher who loves

literature and is equipped with knowledge and skills to present the “sweetness and light” in literature. Graduate Education especially specialized courses produce experts in the field.

### **Personal and Professional Promotions that the Participants had after Completing their Graduate Program.**

According to Gupta (2011) promotion refers to a higher post carrying greater responsibilities, higher status, and better salary. It is the upward movement of an employee in the organization's hierarchy. Promotions are used to reward employees that perform better and to motivate them to greater effort. Promotion is one of the extrinsic rewards. The promotion is also an important factor in an employee's life and career, which can affect their motivation. The promotion will boost employees to perform a job more efficiently and effectively in order to improve their talent. The promotion will give long-term satisfaction to employees.

Regardless of their initial reasons when they enrolled in the graduate school, the participants experienced the tremendous benefits that their graduate degree had offered to them. They are captured by the themes that follow:

**Theme 1. Leadership Opportunities.** To lead is in itself a reward. Leadership opportunities are a gateway to influence people and make work done. According to Bernard Keys and Thomas, leadership is the process of influencing and supporting others to work enthusiastically towards achieving objectives'. When an individual is given the opportunity to lead then he/she is also accorded the opportunity to achieve goals with others.

One of the benefits of the participants enjoyed after finishing their masters is leadership in nature: Their responses are:

*“I never thought that I would be given the chance to handle our publication in school. My principal believes that because I finished Masters in English, I am the fitting teacher to head our school publication.” P8*

*“My principal recommended me to be an officer in our PTO. He even designated me as the MTB-MLE Coordinator. I could attribute all these to my masters' degree.” P5*

*“Research is not easy. My Dean who happens to be monitoring me in my graduate studies designated me as the Research Coordinator of our College immediately after finishing my final defense.” P2*

Some say that leaders are not born. Others say they are made. Whether born or made, a leader needs knowledge, skills, experience, and strong interpersonal relationship to succeed in leading. Most of the time the requirements to be a leader are honed, developed, and improved by graduate education.

**Theme 2. Promotion and Salary Increase.** The higher the educational qualifications, the higher the salary and the chance to be promoted. This is usually the case in both public and private sectors, agencies or institutions. Aside from the new learning that they can surely gain, individuals enrol in graduate programs to be promoted and paid higher salary. Bullock, Stritch, and Rainey (2015) research shows, in the private and public sectors, salaries play an important role in ensuring employees are motivated, thorough, loyal and sincere to their work. Meanwhile, promotion gives an individual a sense of authority and fulfilment. Moving to the next level of one's profession brings about satisfaction.

The participants experienced professional promotion (work) after completing their graduate program.

*"From Teacher 1 I became Teacher 3. This is one of the reasons why I enrolled in masters. But, I received more than I expected. Because of my promotion, I received significant increase in my salary. And I am hoping that DHVSU would offer PhD. so I could enrol again."*  
P11

*"After graduation, I got promoted right away from Contract of Service to Temporary. I receive the same salary as the salary of a permanent faculty. This means a lot to me because I get to enjoy even all benefits."* P9

*"From Teacher 1 to Teacher 2. From SG 11 to SG 12. This promotion is on top of all the learnings and experiences that I had in the graduate school."* P4

There are a lot of reasons why a person enrolls in a graduate program. Regardless of these reasons, promotion is assured after completing their degree. Promotion serves as a motivation to individuals who pursue graduate education.

**Theme 3. Variety of Exposures in the Field.** In any organization, newbies usually undergo "baptism of fire" in which they are tasked to do multiple tasks and errands. Various management styles allow this to happen. Managers or superiors prefer to see the character of newbie workers at the onset. This determines their plight in the workplace whether they will be renewed or terminated after a few months. There are instances, however, when employees are given various tasks because of their qualifications and abilities.

The participants expressed their delight in sharing what they had experienced when they finished their masters. They said that various activities and tasks were accorded to them that made them show their knowledge and skills. Because of this, their principal and their colleagues have trusted them in various fields. Some of their testimonies are:

*"Because I was the second teacher who finished masters, my principal and colleagues trust me so much that they tap me in almost all areas in school. I was assigned to be part of*

*the SBM. I was asked to be the official EMCEE especially whenever we have visitors from the Division, and so on.” P1*

*“During my final defense, our entire school was celebrating with me. During graduation, they felt that they were all with me graduating, too. They said that because I am already masters I could be of greater help in our school. So the next day, I was assigned to be coordinator in 3 areas.” P6*

*“I like it when I am given additional tasks or responsibilities. I believe these are means for me to discover my other abilities and be of help to others. The advantage of having masters is promotion; personal promotion and sometimes work promotion without increase in salary. I got exposed to various tasks being a Girl Scout Coordinator to Module Writer.” P13*

When people are tapped, they are given the opportunity to show who they are and what they are capable of. They are given the chance to be of help to others and serve as an inspiration to many. They are given the signal to give their best and make an impact in everything that they do. Finishing a graduate degree usually placed an individual in all these opportunities and chances.

### **Suggestions the Participants Consider Important to Improve the Program.**

There are no perfect programs. And to determine what needs to be improved or what needs to be sustained is to ask those who had the chance to take the program and experienced its viability. When asked about the things that are important to improve the program, the participants shared the following:

**Theme 1. Assign Advisers while Taking Thesis Writing and Provide more Writing Sessions.** Agatep & Villalobos (2020) explicated that the Graduate School is a research-based department among universities and colleges, and thus considered as its major tasks is to prepare and equip its students to become expert researchers. The equipping starts when expert teachers are assigned to teach research subjects where technical assistance is readily provided. Some of the participants had a common response when it comes to tapping advisers right away even during Thesis Writing subject. This may help them set the right direction for their thesis. Some of their responses include:

*“When I had my thesis writing, it was not easy because I did not know yet who my adviser will be. In other words, students should be given assigned advisers while taking Seminar in Thesis writing so that they will be encouraged to push through thesis writing after completing academic requirement. Thesis manual be given for students to be guided properly.” P3*

*“I was so excited when it was my thesis writing time. However, there was no guarantee that my thesis teacher then would be my thesis adviser so I considered that as a*

*serious thing. I had a lot of what ifs. What ifs the panel during defense will not approve the title or proposal in my thesis writing class? So, I think it would be of great help to us students if prior thesis writing we will be given the chance to choose our thesis adviser right away.”*  
P12

*“During our first month in thesis writing I was groping in the dark because I did not know what to do. We were given enough lectures and presentations but limited time in writing. Even before I could think about three titles, it was already time to finish and submit Chapter 1. More sessions or additional sessions in writing are very ideal for me.”* P14

Thesis writing which is the ultimate phase to be hurdled in graduate school is the “make or break” step towards earning one’s degree and diploma. Seeing how challenging and important thesis writing is, more support and guidance is certainly necessary in every step of the thesis writing journey. The selection of the right adviser who is a known expert not only in the field but also on the topic of the researcher is very crucial. Thesis writing, after all is not only the journey of the advisee but the journey of both the adviser and the advisee.

**Theme 2. Offer more Literature Subjects as Electives.** Not all language teachers are literature teachers. This is the rule of the thumb. Just like language, literature is a separate discipline. If it requires rigors to learn language as major, equal rigors is demanded by literature.

According to Ornstein & Hunkins (2009) curriculum design involves philosophical and theoretical, as well as practical, issues. One's philosophy influences interpretation and selection of objectives, selection and organization of content, decisions about how to teach or deliver the curriculum content, and judgments about how to evaluate the success of the developed curriculum.

The offering of a balanced curriculum is very important. Balance means offering of equal number of subjects that are within the area/s of the program.

The participants acknowledged the need to learn literature the way they learned language. They know that in school, they do not only teach language subjects but literature subjects, too. When asked about their suggestion on how to improve the program, the following summarized their responses:

*“When I was in college I did not pay much attention on literature. I thought that once I learned English then it will be very easy for me to learn or even teach literature. Little did I know that the challenges I had when I learned English would also be the challenges that I would have to learn literature. Graduate school may consider offering additional literature subjects instead of education subjects which we had already when we were in college. Literature is interesting, after all.”* P5

*“The first time I heard her talking I was in awe. The next time that I heard her analyzing a piece of literature, I was blown away. She rekindled my love for literature. I realized that there are a lot of things that I still need to learn. It would be better if more literature subjects will be included in the prospectus at least as additional electives.” P8*

*“The program is MAEd in English but even then how I wish that more literature subjects will be included like electives instead of education subjects. I believe in the power of literature to transform teachers to become more sensitive teachers.” P10*

Language teachers are not literature teachers. Literature teachers are not language teachers. But, it is possible for language teachers to become literature teachers by providing them additional subjects whether minor or major. Now a days, it is very important that teachers become experts in their field and other allied to their fields. This could be done by giving them the opportunity to maximize their stay in the graduate school by exposing them to subjects related to their fields.

## **Conclusions**

To answer the specific questions of the study, the following are the findings:

**Participants Characterization of Themselves after Completing their Graduate Program**  
After completing their graduate program, the participants characterized themselves as more linguistically capable and highly strategic and preference-based.

**Changes that the Participants Receive and Developed after Completing their Graduate Program**

As regards changes that the participants received and developed after completing their language program, they said that they developed confidence and practice time management and nurtured critical eye for literature

**Personal and Professional Promotions that the Participants had after Completing their Graduate Program**

When asked about their personal and professional promotions, the following themes emerged: leadership opportunities, promotion, and salary increase, variety of exposures in the field.

**Suggestions the Participants Consider Important to Improve the Program**  
In consideration of improving the program, the following themes were formed out of the suggestions of the participants: assign advisers while taking thesis writing and provide more writing sessions for thesis writing and offer more literature subjects as electives.

From the findings of the study, the conclusions are as follows:

There was an overwhelming improvement in the personality of the participants whether as an individual or a language and literature teacher.

The participants exude conviction manageability every time they perform their functions and attend to tasks through their knowledge of their field of expertise.

The participants enjoy personal, financial, work-related, and ability-based promotions upon completing their graduate program.

The participants need assistance in terms of thesis writing through sustainable guidance and immersion. Likewise, they would like to be more adept in literature teaching.

From the conclusions, the following are hereby recommended:

Graduate School program chairs may conduct survey of their incoming students focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of the latter to be able to address them in the program.

Institutions may provide various opportunities for students to develop holistically and maximize their potentials especially in their area of expertise.

Graduate schools may sustain what they do best for their students and identify areas where consideration is required.

Institutions may ensure the match in loading teachers in their areas of expertise so that additional technical assistance required across subjects may be delivered especially in thesis writing.

Future researchers may dwell on curriculum review and faculty qualifications in graduate school.

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